

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Panel Manager - Dr. Stephen G. Sapp, Iowa State University

Program Director - Dr. Mark R. Bailey

Constantly changing forces, such as increased concentration of various industries, environmental concerns, ever improving technologies dealing with high speed communications, shifting demographic trends, changes in Federal assistance programs and policies, and adoption of international trade agreements and foreign policy initiatives all have impacts, contributing threats to the well-being of, and/or opportunities for rural people, communities, and small towns. Research that not only identifies and ameliorates threats but which also identifies opportunities are needed if the economic, social and amenity values ascribed to rural areas are to remain. Consequently, the development and implementation of effective public policies and programs to revitalize rural areas and communities and provide acceptable levels of quality of life and economic viability for rural people are made more difficult. Current and future vitality and quality of life factors in rural areas remain important areas of concern. Additionally, understanding the implications of shifts in local, State and Federal policies and programs upon rural areas, communities, small towns, and families and their institutions are also important. This program calls for theoretical and empirical research to help understand the ways these forces affect economic vitality and evaluate how well public policies might restore this vitality. Research is supported in three general areas: (1) new theoretical and methodological studies to focus on improving the social and economic well-being of rural families and communities at the national, regional and local levels; (2) empirical studies to identify the forces that influence population changes, employment, wage levels and other indicators of social and economic viability; and (3) empirical evaluations of methods and policies to diversify the economies of rural areas, particularly those highly dependent on agriculture, forestry and other natural resource extractive industries.

2000-01938 Commodity System Analysis of Alabama's Pulp and Paper Industry

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Grant 00-35401-9203; \$154,000; 3 Years

Pulp and paper is the dominant sector in the forest products industry in the southeastern United States. Focusing on the case of Alabama, we propose to use the concept of commodity analysis to explore how the pulp and paper sector is integrated into larger political and economic networks. Systematic examination of these linkages will enable us to examine more sociologically interesting questions of resource dependency, poverty, and power. Commodity system analysis has proven a useful conceptual tool for understanding the organization of production and the existence of linkages (local to global) between an industry's input suppliers, consumers, and other interested parties. The pulp and paper sector in Alabama is characterized as a producer-driven commodity system where a few large integrated firms dominate the production and value-added processes. Systematic examination of the power inherent in this industry's domination of economic relationships and its network of alliances will contribute to a greater understanding of processes associated with resource dependency generally, and timber dependency in the South in particular. In applied terms, the pulp and paper industry sits at the center of networks of power and can either support or oppose efforts to promote rural

development efforts desperately needed in most of rural Alabama. The proposed research will build on work conducted through support of previous NRI grants. The objectives are to (1) document how various components of the commodity system model developed for this proposal apply to the pulp and paper industry within Alabama; (2) evaluate and refine the commodity system model based on research conducted under Objective 1; and (3) analyze the nature of economic and political power associated with the pulp and paper industry in Alabama, as well as the ability of other actors to affect the actions of this industry. We propose to meet these objectives through use of primary and secondary data. Primary data will be developed through semi-structured interviews with key informants. Secondary data will be collected from a variety of published and on-line sources, as well as unpublished materials provided by industry, government agencies, and other interested parties.

2000-01927 Transition in Rural Alabama: An Evaluation of a Youth Development Program

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Grant 00-35401-9256; \$171,995; 3 Years

The current project targets risk and protective factors in a sample of African American adolescents residing in rural Alabama. These youth have been identified as being at high risk due poor social and economic conditions. More specifically, the project seeks to (a) complete an initial risk/needs assessment of all youth in grades 8 to 12; (b) implement a universal, school-based intervention program (PAYD: Promoting Alabama Youth Development) designed to both improve social skills and decision making as well as decrease at-risk behaviors (e.g., substance use, risky sexual behavior, and violence); and (c) evaluate the impact of PAYD on adolescents. Data will be collected a total of six times commencing during the fall semester of the first project year through the spring semester of the second project year. Program delivery of the PAYD will occur in small groups at the classroom level over a period of about 10 weeks. The project has great relevance to rural communities with limited resources given the great financial and social costs and burdens associated with dealing with adolescent problem behaviors. Findings and insights gained from the current study will be used to inform and to provide training for educators, parents, employers, community leaders, and policy makers who seek to strengthen vulnerable, rural youth.

2000-01947 The Demographic Implications of Hazardous Facility Development in Rural America

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Grant 2001-35401-10244; \$64,500; 2 Years

This research is designed to examine the demographic implications of hazardous facility development in rural America. Such “opportunity-treat” developments are increasingly being incorporated within rural economic development strategies, and while they offer economic gains through jobs and tax revenue, they also pose risks to public health and safety. There may also be demographic implications manifested within both in- and out-migration streams. Out-migration: increases in local economic opportunity are often seen as a means of reducing the potential for loss of rural human capital as younger, educated individuals move toward opportunity elsewhere.

Is the introduction of economic opportunity through hazardous facility development associated with retention of rural population? This study will examine the age- and educational-characteristics of out-migration streams from areas characterized by waste facility placement relative to those without in order to determine the potential for waste-related economic opportunity to stem the loss of rural human capital. In-migration: Much of today's rural population change attributed to in-migration is amenity driven. Does the introduction of environmental "disamenity" through hazardous facility development repel potential in-migrants? This study will examine the level of in-migration to areas characterized by waste facility placement relative to those without such facilities. In addition, we aim to examine age- and educational-characteristics of in-migration streams to better understand differential migratory responses to this type of development strategy. The conclusions will provide rural decision-makers with a better understanding of the hazardous facility development with regard to rural population shifts.

2000-01937 Satisfaction & Selection in Evaluation of Purchase of Development Rights Program

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Grant 00-35401-9350; \$73,000; 2 Years

Prime agricultural land is being converted to non-agricultural uses. State and local programs for the purchase of development rights (PDR) have spent approximately one billion dollars over the last two decades in an effort to prevent conversion. This project evaluates Delaware's PDR program in terms of participant satisfaction and cost effectiveness. Prior studies have demonstrated a great deal of public support for PDR programs. However, few studies have considered the "supply-side", i.e., how willing are farmers to participate in PDR programs. We use a survey to characterize farmers' decisions whether or not to participate. We also use the results of the survey and to test an adverse selection hypothesis. Specifically, are parcels enrolled in Delaware's PDR program at less risk of conversion than those that are not enrolled? If so, then there may be efficiency gains in targeting future PDR-program purchases to parcels at higher risk of conversion. To this end, we use the techniques in the mechanism design literature to design an efficient contracting mechanism, subject to the information asymmetry. Project results will have policy relevance at the state and national-level in developing more cost-effective PDR programs.

2000-01773 Linking Agriculture, Food Systems, Communities, and Population Health Conference

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Grant 00-35401-9465; \$10,000; 1 Year

Four of the ten leading causes of death in the United States are associated with dietary factors and are estimated to cost more than \$200 billion yearly in medical expenditures and lost productivity. Most research and intervention strategies linking nutrition and health have focused on individuals and individual behaviors. Food choices and nutritional outcomes have been cast as personal decisions made by rational actors. Yet, there are many indications that structural factors such as how agriculture production occurs, the processing and distribution of foods, and

the organization of rural and urban communities into which food flows make important contributions to the health of a population. To date, structural changes in agriculture and food systems have not been related to what is occurring in the health of destination populations. The idea behind the conference is to convene researchers from a variety of disciplines with expertise and interest in the structural relationships of agriculture, food systems, nutrition, and community systems to population health. During the proposed conference, researchers will theorize a series of expected relationships and associations and propose research to increase the knowledge and understanding of the interactions of these concepts. One key outcome from this conference will be a commitment from researchers and a plan for the development of a National Research Initiative proposal on the same topic.

2000-01940 Toward Excellence & New Policy from Delta Partners' Participatory Research

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Grant 00-35401-9321; \$130,000; 2 Years

The Delta Partners Initiative (DPI) is an innovative program funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for six years to “help leaders, community and regional organizations create solutions in leadership community, and economic development.” This research will focus on two initiatives: (1) the Delta Emerging Leaders Program; and (2) the community, Development Demonstration Program. A participatory Evaluation research model will be used, which; (1) provides data from participatory development processes and implementation activities of the two programs; (2) provides program-specific information to strengthen DPI; (3) fosters learning environments so all DPI stakeholders will develop understandings of local conditions and create more effective intervention strategies; (4) assesses DPI's effectiveness and efficiency from recipients' perspectives; and (5) provides a research base for policies to guide rural development. The research will show how pre-existing, ongoing and external events will influence DPI program inputs and outcomes in leadership development and community development. Participatory Evaluation Research methods will include two Evaluation Research Teams comprised of program recipients and the research staff. They will collect and analyze data from focus discussions, structured interviews, formal surveys, participant correspondence, structured questionnaires, participant observations, program files, and formal reports. Comparative analysis, content analysis, or grounded theory will be used for qualitative data. Qualitative and quantitative data will be tabulated and analyzed using appropriate research methods. Expected results are: (1) program recipients and staff will gain understandings of conditions and dynamics in the Delta and from research on leadership, community and economic development interventions; (2) a stronger and practical research base to support public policy and excellence in rural development programs in areas characterized by pervasive poverty; and (3) numerous practical publications and research monograph titled: Participatory Evaluation Research and rural Community Development: Outcomes and Lessons Learned in the Mississippi Delta.

2000-01278 Rural Development, Rural Electric Cooperatives, and Electric Deregulation

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Grant 00-35402-9261; \$30,000; 2 Years

Historically, electric utilities have been regulated monopolies. In recent years, the utility industry has been deregulated at the federal level and increasingly at the state level. Electric deregulation has significantly changed the institutional structure and market dynamics by which electricity is delivered in rural states with sparse populations. The purpose of this project is to identify the barriers and opportunities of electric deregulation for rural development, especially for the rural electric cooperatives that serve 32 million people in 46 states. In Montana and the neighboring states served by the state's electric cooperatives, low population density poses particular challenges to serving consumers over an immense area. The objectives of this proposal are to determine the barriers and opportunities that rural electric cooperatives face in continuing, or expanding, energy delivery in the region, the opportunities and strategies that the cooperatives use to maintain or expand utility and telecommunications services, and the services that they provide, or fail to provide, toward local community development needs. This exploratory project will investigate these questions through qualitative telephone and in person interview surveys and archival research of public records, reports, and related documents. Findings from the project will provide the basis for a regional workshop of researchers who will use the project's preliminary findings to explore deregulation issues for the West and identify the key questions relating to the impact of utility deregulation on rural development.

2000-01962 People, Place and Policy in the New Millennium

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Grant 00-35401-9234; \$10,000; 1 Year

This two-day conference will involve leaders from the relevant research community and other stake holds, and has two objectives. The first includes three commissioned seminal papers on the following topics: Why is the Concept of Place and Space of Value?; Is a place-Based Policy Feasible? - Views from Other Countries; and the Future of Rural America vis-a-vis the Communications/Information Revolution. The second conference objective is to develop the personal commitment, as well as the technological and process/organizational groundwork needed to be able to develop, nurture, and sustain a learning network — or series of learning communities — around these three themes and other broad rural development themes that may emerge/evolve. The conference will be cosponsored by the Rural Policy Research Institute and the Farm Foundation

2000-01964 Social Capital: Enhancing Measurement; While also Contributing to Improved Understanding and Policy

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Grant 00-35401-9218; \$49,000; 1 Year

This project deals with developing a new and novel approach for measuring social capital — namely contingent valuation (CV) — within the community context Social capital is increasingly recognized as a critical element in rural development, but is woefully under-researched relative to the more traditional forms of capital. Our emphasis on measurement, complemented by an improved understanding of social capital formation, represents a major

contribution to the social capital literature, as well as to community development practice and rural policy formulation. This first of its kind study also has the great potential for making research on social capital much more additive. While the individual is the unit of analysis, the community context is believed to be important and 11 communities in rural nebraska will be carefully selected in a quasi-experimental design. A random sample of households within each community will be drawn and surveyed (by mail). Using sophisticated CV methodology in which the respondent is asked to consider a new place of residence, we will elicit information on the monetary value palced on dofferent tyupes of social capital (e.g., strong ties and weak ties). Validity will be assessed in terms of content validity, construct validity, criterion validity, and comparisons to non-monetary measures of social capital. Using additional data gathered by personal intereviews from a subsample of the respondents, a modified version of the theory of planned behavior to gain an understanding of how and why social capital varies among individuals, and within different community contexts will be employed.

2000-01772 Trade, Employment, and Inequality: An investigation of Rural Economic Change

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Grant 00-35401-9204; \$150,000 ; 2 Years

Rising U.S. Involvement in international trade presents both opportunities and challenges for rural economies. Over the past decade, passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Uruguay Round of the General agreement on Tarriffs and Trade (GATT) and other measures aimed at trade liberalization have opened new markets for a wide range of rural products. Current efforts to initiate a new round of global trade negotiations under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO) suggest that these processes will continue and will likely accelerate. For rural firms, the growth of international trade provides new opportunities for export sales in high-tech industries such as electronics and scientific instruments, many of which have begun to locate in rural areas. At the same time, however, using low-cost imports jeopardize jobs and wages in traditional agricultural and national resource-based rural industries such as food processing, textiles. and apparel. Despite the growing importance of international trade for rural areas, there is little empirical knowledge of the impacts of changing patterns of international trade on rural economies, and particularly on agricultural and resources-based rural industrial sectors. This project investigates the impact of changing patterns of U.S. international exports and imports on employment, wages, and income inequality in rural areas. In examining the effects of international trade involvement on rural economies and rural industries, the project will contribute to an understanding of the larger economic forces that are currently shaping rural areas.

2000-01760 Smarter Growth in Thinning Counties: Individual Decisions, Collective Problems

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Grant 00-35401-9258; \$98,000; 2 Years

In the 1990's, development of American farmland, forests, and open space has doubled, even while many rural areas simultaneously experienced population loss. This "rural sprawl" is costly, undermines rural quality of life, and hinders farm production. This proposal aims to identify and test policies to counter rural sprawl, accounting for the complexity of individual decisions that produce current settlement patterns. The project uses two methods. First, it will develop case studies of two upstate New York counties where farming is still strong and population growth is not occurring, but populated centers are losing residents while rural towns are gaining. Methods include GIS and statistical analysis of data on the built, natural, fiscal, and regulatory environment; reviews of local records; interviews with land-use decision-makers; and projections of future housing trends. Second, it will adapt an agent-based model (ABM) to rural land use decisions to discover via simulation what policies promote in-fill and reuse of existing town centers and villages. An ABM assumes that interactions among dissimilar agents (builders, local officials, households, and land owners) determine spatial patterns, and that not every agent of a class (builders, for example) has precisely the same characteristics. We will specify decision rules for these agents and assign the rules based on the case study findings and on published literature. We will then allow interactions among the agents on a simulated landscape also based on the case study findings. Regulatory and fiscal responses developed with stakeholders will be applied to observe the emergent development pattern.

2000-01944 Decentralization, Capital Mobility, and Local Well-Being: Rural Counties in a New Policy Era

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Grant 00-35401-9254; \$235,000; 2 Years

Rural communities are at the forefront of significant government changes. As a consequence of decentralization, local governments now play a greater role in redistribution of resources. Economic growth has risen to the top of local policy agendas, and local governments increasingly use own-source funds for programs, including tax abatements, to create and retain jobs. We refer to these changes as *localization of redistribution and localization of economic growth strategies*. Localization poses challenges for rural governments in sustaining well-being and equitable distribution of resources in an era of mobile capital. The proposed study undertakes primary data collection on all U.S. county governments, the fastest growing local governments, to assess local responses to decentralization. The project will address the following questions: What types of growth and redistribution strategies are local governments currently pursuing? What factors influence growth and redistribution policy strategies of local governments in the 1990's? Do certain policy strategies coincide in certain locales, so that some communities are pursuing a "race to the bottom?" Primary data will be collected through a national survey of county governments. The study places localization in macro-level, multi-disciplinary social science theory and links local growth strategies to federal devolution.

2000-01945 Wages, Jobs and the Environment: Policy Choices for Rural Areas

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Grant 00-35401-9320; \$60,000; 1 Year

Many rural communities are in a critical economic condition. The continuing exodus of farmers from agricultural production has led to significant population loss from rural areas. Communities in agriculturally-dependent regions desperately need employment opportunities that will stem further population loss. But the options available often are not good. Firms locating in rural areas often do so because they believe they will be subject to less stringent environmental regulations than if they were to locate in more densely populated areas. Further, the jobs created by these firms often pay little more than minimum wage. The rural community thus confronts the dilemma of continuing population loss, or facing unknown changes in the quality of life for its residents brought on by industrial development. In this project we address three questions: Is rural economic development necessarily and always incompatible with environmental quality; more generally, how do environmental quality and regulations influence rural economic growth; and how does economic growth in turn affect the quality of the environment? To address these questions, we will (1) compile detailed data at the county-level on migration, wages, and employment in different industries, and on environmental quality and regulations, for 1987, 1992 and 1997 and (2) describe and assess recent changes and trends in industry-level wages and employment, migration and the environment in rural communities. This data base and our analytical results will be made available to rural community leaders and scientists via the World Wide Web.

2000-01766 FRIS - A Distributed Regional Data Center Prototype for Texas

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Grant 00-35106-9286; \$43,000; 1 Year

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) is requesting a fiber channel RAID 3 storage area network to enhance the storage capacity of the Forest Resources Institute's (FRI) Forest Resources Information System (FRIS). FRIS is cooperating with the Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS) to provide access to high quality spatial data through development of a Regional Service Center (RSC) prototype. The largest obstacle to realizing this goal is acquiring adequate storage to handle the volume of data that will be required by the system. The FRIS is a comprehensive, multi-format database for southern forest ecosystems. It is fundamentally important to the research activities of the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and SFASU. FRIS provides base mapping, literature review, and background data for many projects, and serves as a repository for research results. In addition to these university-related functions, FRIS provides digital base map data to the general public via the Internet, useful for such applications as rural economic development, pro-active planning, environmental protection, improved public safety programs, and more equitable social services. The requested storage area network will do the following: contribute to the development of the RSC prototype; provide storage to accommodate new data sets as they become available to FRI; alleviate congestion of the current system; expand the capacity of the existing system to embrace new projects; enable FRI to develop new applications to meet the needs of researchers, educators, industry, and the public; and will allow for future growth.

2000-01930 Socioeconomic Well-Being and Amenity Resource Dependence in Rural Counties Gramann, J.H.; Torres, C.C.

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Grant 00-35401-9260; \$86,000; 2 Years

With declining levels of traditional employment, rural areas often seek economic diversification by emphasizing amenity uses of natural resources, including development such as outdoor recreation, tourism, and retirement destinations. It is frequently assumed that such development has both social and economic benefits for residents compared to more extractive uses of natural resources. However, the consequences of such development policies need to be examined more closely. For example, a recurring criticism of tourism development in rural areas is that it exploits minority populations by creating labor-intensive, low-wage jobs which perpetuate existing social and economic inequities. Understanding these consequences will assist policymakers faced with difficult rural development decisions. The objective of this study is to assess how different forms of economic dependence on natural resources in non-metropolitan counties in the 48 contiguous States affect residents' socioeconomic well-being, including unemployment rates, poverty levels, and public assistance rates. The study's objective will be accomplished by comparing socioeconomic conditions in rural counties dependent on agriculture, mining, timber, and commercial fisheries with those relying on amenity-centered natural resource development, including recreation, tourism, and retiree settlements. Additionally, the study will investigate how these relationships differ by the demographic characteristics of a county, including age profile and a county's ethnic and racial make-up. Using 1980 and 1990 census data and related data sources, the project examines relationships between resource dependence and socioeconomic well-being in 1990, as well as the stability of these relationships between 1980 and 1990.

2000-01939 The Influence of Property Rights Orientations on Rangeland Management and Community Stability in Areas of Rapid Population Expansion

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Grant 00-35401-9255; \$60,000; 2 Years

In recent years, rangeland-based rural communities in the western and southwestern USA have experienced dislocation due to low livestock prices, reduced rangeland productivity, and rapid subdivision of land for development. Changing conditions that decrease landowners' control over resources on their land tend to diminish long-term investments and accelerate the sale of land for non-rural purposes often to investors who do not depend on the land for their livelihood. Landowners' orientations to property rights may significantly influence the way landowners respond to changing conditions. The project will focus on the linkages between ranch operators' orientations toward property rights, patterns of investment, and levels of commitment to the communities in which they are located, in order to determine how these orientations affect rural community stability under changing social conditions. By including Texas and Utah, the research will address the role of property rights perspectives on rangeland management and rural community stability under two distinct land tenure arrangements. The project will include conducting initial fieldwork to develop a questionnaire, pre-testing the questionnaire, and then conducting a pilot study in two non-metropolitan counties in both Texas and in Utah. The results

of the pilot study will be used to develop a comprehensive research proposal to determine how property rights orientations under different land tenure systems affect rangeland management and community stability in areas with rapidly expanding populations.

2000-01765 Community Satisfaction, Community Attachment, and Rural Development

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Grant 00-35401-9258; \$75,000; 2 Years

Two major weaknesses associated with the community satisfaction and attachment literature must be addressed before additional research on these topics can be viewed as meaningful and/or practical for social scientists and policy makers. These shortcomings include: (1) the lack of conceptual clarity with respect to the terms community satisfaction and attachment; and (2) the paucity of research that has empirically examined the link between community satisfaction and/or attachment and individual- and community-level issues. This study proposes to address these weaknesses by (a) focusing explicitly on the meanings of the concepts of "satisfaction" and "attachment" as understood by the general population; and (b) examining how these concepts relate to individual well-being and community agency. The following interrelated objectives will be addressed in two rural Texas communities: (1) to provide an increased understanding of the analytical distinctiveness between the concepts of community satisfaction and attachment; (2) to empirically examine the effects of community satisfaction and attachment on individual well-being; (3) to empirically examine the effects of community satisfaction and attachment on community agency, and (4) to use the results to develop and test a refined model that will aid in designing new approaches to rural development. Data collection techniques will include key informant interviews, focus groups, and a general population household survey. The findings of this study will be used to develop future case-study and comparative-community research designs that will explicitly address questions about how community satisfaction and attachment contribute to individual well-being and community agency, and, in turn, to community development.

2000-01769 Job Training and Productivity in Rural America

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Grant 00-35401-9319; \$236,000; 3 Years

Job training is considered one of the most important factors affecting the productivity of the workforce. Yet, many rural employers do not provide much job training, and when they do, it tends to be very specific types of training. This study examines the constraints to employer job training in rural areas. In the first stage of the study we will conduct a phone survey of approximately 1,500 manufacturing and service firms in non-metropolitan areas of the U.S. to assess the level of training effort, the types of programs provided, and constraints they face in improving their training program. These data will be merged with data on the industry and community in which the firm is located to examine how these factors affect job training effort. The second stage of the study will collect information on 500 training institutions (vocational and technical post-secondary schools) regarding their programs and linkages with employers and other community-based organizations. We are interested in how the availability of these programs affects the level and type of training offered by employers. Finally, we will conduct six

case studies of community-based organizations offering training programs. We will evaluate the level and type of training offered in these settings and assess the effectiveness of these workforce development networks in addressing the training problems in rural areas.